Economic Impacts of the War in Ukraine

Posted on January 10, 2025

Frame analysis is a technique that studies how individuals understand activities and situations happening in their environment by looking at the images, stereotypes, messages, actors, or metaphors that people usually use to construct their reality in the world. The frame analysis technique in this regard may apply a humanitarian frame which emphasizes the human suffering and loss of lives caused by the war or it may use a geopolitical frame that focuses on the power dynamics and strategic interests of the actors involved in the war, Ukraine and Russia. For instance, if the humanitarian frame is applied to the analysis of the topic “Economic Impacts of the War in Ukraine”, the frame may use metaphors of domination or aggression, images of military equipment, messages appealing to interests or security, actors involved in the war such as allies and leaders, and the sources of information or news that are biased, censored, or selective. Building on the technique of frame analysis, this paper evaluates the effects of each frame regarding the unmitigated catastrophe the Russian invasion has posed to Ukraine and its economy and how each frame in the selected news reports shapes the perception, behavior, and attitude of the audience towards the issue.

Frame Analysis

The sources collected for the analysis are from ABC News, The New York Times, CNN Business, PBS News Hour, Breitbart, Vox, USA Today, The Daily Show with Trever Noah, and financialeducator_rob Roberto (TikTok video). All these news reports revolve around the implications of the war and economic impacts in Ukraine that have posed serious catastrophic consequences to global peace and particularly the peace in Europe. In one respect, both countries in war do not largely influence the global economy but they are the major suppliers of the products and resources that influence the economy of the European countries and also the entire world.

Conflict Frame

The frame that is used in the news report “Ukraine War Continues to Slow Global Growth” presented by The New York Times is the conflict frame to present the Ukraine war as a source of uncertainty and instability for the global economy. The conflict frame is a type of media frame that often portrays the issue and emphasizes the differences or disputes between different actors involved in an issue as a zero-sum game where one side bears the loss and the other side has all the gains. The report mentions that the Ukraine-Russia war has caused a humanitarian crisis and a “major shock to the global economy” disrupting the trade flows and energy supplies between Russia and Europe. The conflict frame in the report shows that the war has strained the relations between the West and Russia leading to sanctions and counter-sanctions that have reduced the growth prospects and

confidence of businesses and investors around the globe. Moreover, the conflict frame also highlights that the war has posed a political deadlock in Ukraine and has increased military spending more than both countries used to spend in the past decades which has raised the security concerns of the NATO allies (The New York Times, 2022). The report also implies that the war is a source of division and tension among the actors involved and there is no easy or quick solution to this Russia-Ukraine conflict. The frame based on the information presented in the report through soaring energy prices, disruptions of the supply chain, and the shortage of essential goods suggest that the war will continue to have negative impacts on the economy of the globe in the foreseeable future. Moreover, the video titled "The Global Impacts of Putin's War in Ukraine" on "The Daily Show with Trevor Noah" with UN Ambassador speaker Sergiy Kyslytsya also uses the conflict frame in order to frame the issue of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In this conflict frame case, the news report discusses the conflict between authoritarianism and democracy to highlight the potential consequences of Ukraine's war on global economics, security, and stability.

Thematic Frame

The news report "1 Year Later: How the War in Ukraine is Affecting Food Supplies, Prices around the World" implies a thematic frame to present the issue as the report not only describes the immediate incident of the war in Ukraine but also gives background information about the causes and consequences of the Russia-Ukraine war to the globe. By definition, a thematic frame focuses on the big picture of the event or issue through expert analysis, providing statistics, and other information that can be used to help the audience of the report view the event or conflict in a broader context. The news report using a thematic frame gives statistics and information regarding the humanitarian crisis, political tensions, global food security, and economic sanctions. Anna Voloshyna, a Ukraine chef, provides the information that people "feel that they cannot afford to buy food anymore" even though they do not know about Ukraine and the conflict which has increased the food shortage around the world and resulted in soaring food prices (Jacobo & Zahn, 2023). This report also uses sources of different perspectives such as the European Union, the United Nations, and the World Bank, and the farmers (producers) or consumers in Ukraine and other territories around the world. The thematic frame used in the report aims to show how the war is not an isolated event. It puts further the idea that war whether it is in Ukraine or any other country is a complex and interconnected issue that affects many regions and individuals across the globe. In addition, the report "Global Economy Shows Resilience, Pain 1 Year Since the Start of Ukraine War" presented by PBS News Hour also uses the same frame to provide information about the economic impacts of the Ukraine war and the perspectives of various stakeholders and experts about the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The report implying a thematic frame discusses the geopolitical implications of the Ukraine war aiming to inform the audience about the global ramifications of the conflict, the challenges that the Ukraine war poses for the world economy, and prospects as well as opportunities for peace and recovery of the region.

The Humanitarian Frame or the Human Interest Frame

The human interest frame or the humanitarian frame possibly used in the news report “The Global Impacts of Putin’s War in Ukraine” in a TikTok video personalizes the conflict and evokes emotional responses from the audience of the news (Ukraine’s ambassador to the United Nations discussed the ongoing conflict with Russia on The Daily Show, 2022). This frame focuses on the stories and experiences of individuals affected by the conflict due to political issues. The frame also appeals to the audience’s compassion and empathy while the ambassador shares his personal insights and perspectives on war and shows some clips of Ukrainian people suffering from the conflict. The frame used in the news report persuades the audience to criticize Putin’s motives and actions following his aggression and extend support to Ukraine amidst the war and suffering.

Episodic Frame

The episodic frame is implied in the news report “IMF: Inflation and Ukraine War Take Toll on Global Growth” presented by Breitbart on January 31. 2023, which mentions the latest projections of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the global economy. The report presents that these projections are lower than the previous ones offered to the globe due to the effects of food shortage, rising inflation, and the effects of the Ukraine war. The episodic frame presents the information while focusing on the information about the immediate event or issue without giving any context about the underlying issue. The report following the episodic frame does not mention any policy or solution to address the challenges or problems that Ukraine is facing due to the war imposed on the country and issues the global economy has faced to date due to the Ukraine-Russia conflict. The news report also quotes some important statements from the IMF chief economist and other experts that “Britain is the only advanced economy where the IMF forecasts negative growth this year, with the economy expected to shrink by 0.6%.” This was a 2023 forecast quoted in the original news report, not a current economic projection, and it illustrates how the article framed the conflict at that time (UPI, 2023). However, the report does not quote any historical, political, geographical, or cultural background on the causes and consequences of the Russia-Ukraine war in the region and the rising inflation nor does the report offer any comparison or analysis of the issue with other regions at war and their economic condition.

Disaster Frame

In the news report titled “How Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine Changed the Global Economy in a Week” sourced through CNN Business, the possible frame used is the disaster frame that focuses mainly on the negative consequences of the Ukraine war on the global economy. The major implications of the war the world has witnessed are inflation, energy crisis, sanctions, food shortage, currency collapse,

and poverty. The analysis of the report following the disaster frame shows that the news source uses expert opinions and statistics to provide evidence of the damage “the huge price increase” that will be “adding to inflation that could hurt economic growth by reigniting fears of stagflation” as well as the massive destruction the Ukraine war has caused (Riley, 2022). The report also supports claims of the negative consequences of the war through the usage of words such as “isolated”, “shock”, “soaring”, and “collapsed” to convey the severity of the situation and emphasize the sense of urgency. The disaster frame in this report possibly aims to capture the audience’s attention to the issue and elicit emotional responses such as sympathy and anger from the audience of the news report.

Causal Frame

The news report titled “Why the Global Economy is Slowing” presented by Vox uses possibly a causal frame to explain the reasons behind the global economic slowdown as the report uses words and phrases like “because of”, “reflecting”, “amid”, and “due to” show the causal relationship between different factors and aspects of the war that affect the global economy. The causal frame, in simpler words, is a way of presenting and providing information that focuses on the consequences of an event, phenomenon, problem, issue, or conflict. The report uses charts and data to illustrate the causal effect of the aspects of the global slowdown on the global economic outlook as it says “If European consumers are spending more of their budgets on food items, they have less money to spend on other goods and services” that has led to income inequality, poverty, debt, and a rise in inflation (Ngo, Vox, 2022). The report implying a causal frame highlights the risks and uncertainties comparing the projected growth rates and prospects of advanced and developing economies that worsen the slowdown. The report explains the divergence of the uneven external financing and the emergence of new variants that subsequently lead to social as well as global unrest. The causal frame reports the escalation of geopolitical tensions between Ukraine and the rest of the world by calling for the policy coordination and international cooperation of the leaders to mitigate what war has caused to the globe so far.

Consequence Frame

The news report from TikTok titled “The Ukraine invasion could make us spend more” uses a consequence frame which is a type of news frame that focuses on the potential implications of the conflict for the audience. The frame suggests the possible outcome of the Ukraine-Russia conflict and invasion that are relevant to the audience’s personal interests “We might see gas prices go up $4-$7 a gallon” says Roberto in the video (The Ukraine invasion could make us spend more, 2022). The frame in the report implies a negative impact on the audience’s economic well-being as the news report curates detrimental consequences people around the globe have to face due to the conflict between two territories, Russia and Ukraine. Thus, the consequence frame influences the opinions and attitudes of the audience by making them more concerned about the Ukraine-Russia conflict and

the two territories at war as well as the possible implications of the war on their lives.

Generic Frame

The news report “UN Report Found 71M People Pushed into Poverty After the War in Ukraine Started” from USA Today possibly implies the generic frame in combination with both the responsibility frame and economic consequences frame. The generic frame has a set of indicators that examine the lead paragraph of the UN report that found that 71 million people were pushed into poverty after the war and conflict started in Ukraine. The generic frame provides some details about the report quoting the UN secretary general for the events such as the regions impacted, the people affected, and what caused the poverty and inflation (The USA Today, 2022). Based on the generic frame analysis, it is inferred that the report uses responsibility and economic consequences frames to emphasize the monetary costs of the problem and the negative economic impact of the war on millions of Ukrainian people as these frames assign blame or responsibility for the problem or conflict on one group, entity, or the actor involved. In this news report case, the frames imply that the Ukraine war is the main cause of the rise in inflation and poverty and that the UN as well as international leaders have the responsibility to help the war-affected people. In a nutshell, the frames influence how the audience perceives the conflict, the causes of the war, the problems caused due to war, the potential consequences, the possible solutions, and the actors involved.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the frame analysis method can be applied to news reports to examine how different sources frame the issue such news reports pose and what implications they have for the audience. In the present paper, the news reports selected for the frame analysis provide details about the ongoing war in Ukraine and what detrimental economic impacts the Ukrainian war is imposing on the people of Ukraine in particular. The presenters of the news and speakers in the videos provide the salient facets of the Ukraine war and its impacts on the Ukraine economy as well as the global economy. By highlighting these aspects of frame analysis explored in the news reports, these reports frame a single narrative of the Ukraine-Russia war as a threat to global stability, prosperity, and peace. The frame analysis whether it is the humanitarian frame, conflict frame, generic frame, or causal frame provides the heart of the matter which is Ukraine at war and the implications of war on the economy.

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